

PERSONAL SHAVING RAZORRelated Applications

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of Application Ser. No. 10/219,095, filed August 13, 2002, which is a continuation of Application Ser. No. 09/725,789, filed November 29, 2000, now abandoned, which claims priority to provisional Application Ser. No. 60/245,397, filed November 1, 2000.

Background of the InventionField of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to personal shaving razors and particularly disposable and replaceable razors for grooming in fine detail.

Description of the Related Art

[0003] Current razors both disposable and replaceable head-type are typically suited to remove hair from the face or legs or head and are usually about an inch across in shaving width. There is a need for a razor with a reduced size head for shaving areas requiring much finer detail such as, for example, the bikini areas and around the nose and ears. However, there is also a need for such a razor for shaving fine details and shapes into the hair on a person's scalp, such as is popular among some cultures. What is needed is a razor capable of shaving in much finer detail.

Summary of the Invention

[0004] The systems and methods have several features, no single one of which is solely responsible for its desirable attributes. Without limiting the scope as expressed by the claims that follow, its more prominent features will now be discussed briefly. After considering this discussion, and particularly after reading the section entitled "Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments" one will understand how the features of the system and methods provide several advantages over traditional systems and methods.

[0005] One aspect is a personal styling razor, comprising a handle portion having lower, middle and upper longitudinal portions and a head portion having a razor blade integrally attached to the head portion. In one embodiment, the lower longitudinal portion extends along a first axis and the upper longitudinal portion extends along a second axis and

the first and second axes form a control angle that is less than ninety degrees and the razor blade has a width of less than or equal to one inch.

[0006] In another aspect, the head portion is replaceable. In some embodiments, the head portion is pivotally mounted on the handle portion. The personal styling razor of some embodiments has a control angle of greater than ninety degrees.

[0007] In yet another aspect, the personal styling razor has a length of the upper longitudinal portion that is greater than the width of the blade.

[0008] In some aspects, the personal styling razor further comprises a second razor blade mounted substantially parallel to the razor blade.

[0009] In another aspect, the personal styling razor has a lower longitudinal portion that comprises a first curved shape and a middle longitudinal portion that comprises a second curved shape and wherein the first and second curved shapes form an ergonomically advantageous grip for the personal styling razor.

[0010] In yet another aspect, the personal styling razor further comprises a glide surface area and a blade area, wherein the glide surface area is larger than the blade area.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0011] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of an embodiment of a razor.

[0012] FIG. 2 is a side perspective view of the razor of FIG. 1.

[0013] FIG. 3 is a top perspective view of the razor of FIG. 1.

[0014] FIG. 4 is a top perspective view of a portion of the razor of FIG. 1 taken across section A-A of FIG. 2.

[0015] FIG. 5 is a side perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the inventive razor having a replaceable blade portion.

[0016] FIG. 6 is a side view another embodiment of the razor of FIG. 1.

[0017] FIG. 7 is a front view of the shaving head of an embodiment of the razor of FIG. 1.

Detailed Description of Embodiments of the Invention

[0018] Embodiments of the invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying figures, wherein like numerals refer to like elements throughout. The terminology used in the description presented herein is not intended to be interpreted in any

limited or restrictive manner simply because it is being utilized in conjunction with a detailed description of certain specific embodiments of the invention. Furthermore, embodiments of the invention may include several novel features, no single one of which is solely responsible for its desirable attributes or which is essential to practicing the inventions herein described.

[0019] Embodiments of the present invention relate to a styling and grooming razor used for removing unwanted body hair in hard-to-reach or awkward places. Additionally, the razor of these embodiments can be used for shaving with a high degree of detail for safety and ornamental shaving. For example, the razor could be used to groom the eyebrows, moustache, nose, sideburns, scalp, abdomen, bikini area, toes and other parts of the body. Certain embodiments are able to accomplish such effects because the size of the razor blades are very small in comparison to conventional razor blades and because the handle allows for greater control of the razor blade. In some embodiments, the blades are 1 inch, 1/2 inch, 3/8 inch, 1/4 inch, 1/8 inch or any size or range of sizes in between any of these sizes. Furthermore, in certain embodiments, each of the different size blades or heads can be used as interchangeable cartridges on the same razor handle, and can have single or multiple cutting edges.

[0020] In certain embodiments, the razor is integrally molded, in plastic for example, to provide a number of different blade width shaving heads in a disposable form. The various width shaving heads can be interchangeably mounted on the same handle in some embodiments allowing maximum flexibility in the usage of a shaver. For instance, for general purpose shaving a larger shaving head can be used such that an area of hair can be removed faster. However, where an area is difficult to shave due to the space availability of the surface, or where greater detail is required, a smaller shaving head can be used to carefully remove the unwanted hair while leaving undisturbed the surrounding hair or skin.

[0021] Conventional hand-held razors exist in disposable and replaceable head, or standard, types. For example, standard and disposable razors are marketed by Gillette, Schick and other such companies. These companies typically sell these two types of razors. The disposable razor includes a handle and angled head having a fixed blade or twin fixed blades as a single, integrally molded device. The disposable razor may be thrown away when

the blade has become too dull for effective shaving. The standard razor includes a handle and head that includes some sort of retention mechanism for holding replaceable blade cartridges.

[0022] While both types of razors are extremely popular, the razor blades are fairly wide and are typically only effective for shaving large surfaces such as facial hair or leg hair, for example. Embodiments of the present invention provide a significant improvement in that a variety of narrower width blades can be provided to facilitate use of a razor for styling and grooming of smaller or more awkward areas of the body. Additionally, other embodiments facilitate the use of different sized blades such that large amounts of hair can be removed as in common disposable and standard razors and also very detailed shaving can be performed with the same handle by switching the shaving head.

[0023] FIG. 1 shows a front view of an embodiment of the invention having a handle 10 and blade attachment portion 20. As shown in the side view of an embodiment illustrated by FIG. 2, the blade attachment portion 20 is part of an angular head portion 12 of the handle 10. Preferably, the handle and blade attachment portion are formed of a lightweight material in a well-known manner, for example, by using injection-molded plastic. However, any suitable material and fabrication method can be used to produce the angular head portion 12 and the blade attachment portion 20. In some embodiments, the handle is hollow and has an aesthetically and ergonomically pleasing shape. In certain other embodiments, the handle is solid or hollow and has a grip portion 11. The grip portion 11 of some embodiments is larger, at least in part, than the rest of the handle to allow greater control of the shaving head where precision is required. The ergonomic shape of certain embodiments of the handle include curved portions such as those illustrated in FIG. 1 and FIG. 2. FIG. 1 illustrates an embodiment employing multiple curved portions forming a wavy effect allowing for a better grip on the handle and leading to better and more accurate control of the shaving head. While the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 2 includes a larger thickness in the bottom section of the grip portion 11, this is only an example and the handle can be substantially the same thickness along its length, or it can vary as well.

[0024] Still referring to the embodiment illustrated in Figure 1, the handle 10 may be described as having a lower curved portion and an upper curved portion with a waist portion between the lower and upper curved portions. The waist portion and the two curved

portions provide an effective shape for manipulation by the user's hand. This shape, and other shapes that provide improved manipulation, allows a user to more accurately control the shaving head of the razor. This allows shaving with the care and precision required to shave certain hair-growing areas of the body, or to shave designs into a person's hair with increased detail. The ergonomic shape of the handle 10 combined with the reduced width of the shaving head 20 allow for increased detail in shaving. A design ratio of the width of the curved portion of the handle 10 to the width of the head 20 of greater than one is preferred. Yet further preferred ratios are 1.33:1, 1.5:1 and the most preferred ratio is 2:1 or greater. Such ratios typically ensure that the head 20 is narrow enough to shave with the desired detail while the handle 10 is wide enough to allow a control of the head 20 sufficient to effectively utilize the improved detail.

[0025] FIG. 3 illustrates how the blade attachment portion 20 is integrated with the handle 10. FIG. 4 provides additional detail regarding the inclusion of a razor blade 22 in the blade attachment portion 20. In certain embodiments, the blade attachment portion 20 includes five sections 20a-20e which are organized in a fan-like arrangement and then molded together. Thus, portions 20a and 20e overlap portions 20b and 20d, respectively. Likewise, the rear portion 20c also overlaps portions 20b and 20d. The inside lip of each portion includes a recess 24 (dashed line) to securely accommodate one or more blades. A machine inserts a steel blade portion 22 of the desired size into the recess. As noted above, the width of the steel razor blade be approximately one inch or less, and the dimensions of the blade attachment portion 20 will vary accordingly to accommodate a particular blade size. Although other blade sizes can be used. Once the blade is in place, the blade attachment portion is either snapped into a corresponding receptacle area on the handle, or fixed in place by heating/melting the pieces together.

[0026] Other embodiments of the blade mounting portion 20 are produced as a complete unit through injection molding or other typical manufacturing techniques. Yet other embodiments produce other portions that are then combined to form the head portion. Manufacturing techniques that are currently utilized to produce standard shaving cartridges are used in other embodiments, with the processes being slightly modified to produce the smaller blade sizes. These are only a few examples and any process can be used to

manufacture the blade attachment portion for connection to the handle 10. It should be noted that two or more razor blades could be fit into the recess on the blade attachment portion 20 to provide additional cutting edges.

[0027] An alternative embodiment is shown in FIG. 5. In this embodiment, the angled head 12a includes a retention mechanism 14 which mates with a clip 22b on a replaceable blade cartridge 22a in a well known manner to secure the cartridge to the head 12a. Such a retention mechanism 14 and clip 22b can be of the sliding variety where the cartridge is slid onto the head 12a as in existing shavers, or it can snap into and out of place by resilience of the various components. The retention mechanism 14 includes a release 16, which is hand actuated to allow removal and replacement of the cartridge. Again, some embodiments allow the cartridge to slide off of the head 12a after its use is completed, while in other embodiments the cartridge snaps off by applying force to the back part of the cartridge. Yet other embodiments employ engaging and disengaging mechanisms that can alternately engage and disengage the cartridge with the head 12a by depressing or releasing an actuator on the back of the handle 10. Such mechanisms are well known in the art and any such mechanism can be used in these embodiments.

[0028] FIG. 6 is a side view of a razor 30 that is another embodiment of the handle 10 illustrated in FIG. 1. The razor 30 illustrated in FIG. 6 has a handle 31 made of three longitudinal portions, 32, 34, 36. The bottom longitudinal portion 32 represents a portion of the handle 31 that a user would grab to use the razor 30. The bottom longitudinal portion 32 extends generally along a first longitudinal axis 33. The middle longitudinal portion 34 represents a portion of the handle 31 that would complete the ergonomic design of the grip portion and allows a user to control the razor 30 with his or her fingers or finger tips to maximize the control over a shaving head 38 of the razor 30 during use of the razor 30. The middle longitudinal portion 34 extends generally along a second longitudinal axis 35. The top longitudinal portion 36 extends generally along a third longitudinal axis 37 and locates the shaving head 38 a distance "D" away from the rest of the razor 30. The distance D that the shaving head 38 is located away from the rest of the razor 30 provides multiple effects. As the distance D increases, the shaving head 38 can be maneuvered into tighter shaving locations. However, as the distance D continues to increase, the control over the shaving head can begin to

decrease. Therefore, most embodiments of the razor 30 utilize an upper longitudinal portion 36 on a length ranging between 1/8 inch and one inch. Other embodiments will utilize a distance D of a length ranging between 1/4 inch and 3/4 inch. Yet other embodiments will utilize a distance D of less than 3/4 inch, 5/8 inch, 1/2 inch or 3/8 inch. In some embodiments, the length of the upper longitudinal portion 36 is reduced due to a contour angle C between the first longitudinal axis 33 and the second longitudinal axis 35. As the contour angle C is increased the shaving head 38 is positioned closer to the surface to be shaved thereby reducing the length of the upper longitudinal portion 36 that is preferred for the same positioning of the lower longitudinal portion 32.

[0029] The first longitudinal axis 33 and the third longitudinal axis 37 form a control angle A that provides another design characteristic that can be controlled to maximize the control or effectiveness of the razor 30. In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 6, the control angle A is less than 90 degrees, however, this embodiment is only provided as an example and any angle between 0 and 180 degrees can be used. In some embodiments, the control angle A is less than 90 degrees while in other embodiments, the control angle A is greater than 90 degrees. Additionally, the second longitudinal axis 35 and the third longitudinal axis 37 form an extension angle B that partially determines the angle at which the shaving head 38 is oriented with respect to the rest of the razor 30 when the razor 30 is utilized. The embodiment illustrated utilizes an extension angle B of greater than 90 degrees. This embodiment is just an example of an angle that may be used and any angle between 0 and 180 degrees can be utilized. The extension angle B can optimize the shaving angle the shaving head 38 makes with the skin surface to be shaved when the razor 30 is used, and certain embodiments utilize an extension angle B that is greater than 90 degrees while other embodiments will utilize an extension angle of less than 90 degrees.

[0030] Furthermore, the shaving head 38 is mounted to the upper longitudinal portion 36 at an angle that is appropriate for the application of the razor. In some embodiments, the shaving head 38 is mounted at a right angle while in other embodiments it is mounted at an angle where the bottom of the shaving head 38 is closer to the handle 31 of the razor 30, while in yet other embodiments, the shaving head 38 is mounted such that the bottom of the shaving head 38 is directed away from the handle 31 of the razor 30. In some embodiments, the shaving

head 38 is mounted via a pivoting joint (not shown) such that the angle of the shaving head 38 can vary with respect to the rest of the razor 30 during shaving allowing its use in various applications. Any pivot joint capable of rotatably connecting the shaving head 38 to the upper longitudinal portion 36 can be used. The interaction of the length of the upper longitudinal portion 36 with the positioning of the lower longitudinal portion 32 and the contour angle C can be combined with the effects of the control angle A and the extension angle B to maximize the control over the shaving head 38 by the user. This allows the razor 30 to be used in areas where a high degree of precision is required.

[0031] By combining the extremely small shaving head 38 of some embodiments with the maximized precision control allowed by the handle 31, a razor 30 can now be manufactured that can be used to shave hair from areas not previously possible. While previous razors may have been somewhat smaller than other previous razors, none of those examples could be used for shaving hair as embodiments described herein allow. In some embodiments an upper longitudinal portion of a length of 1/4 inch or larger is used in conjunction with a shaving head 38 that is 1/4 inch or larger in width to allow a stylist to shave fine details into the scalp or beard of a person. Currently there is no razor available that is suitable for this application. Stylists previously broke straight razor blades to create shaving blades of the proper geometry to allow them to shave the styles requested by customers. This practice is unsafe for both the stylist and the customer. The razor 30 of the embodiments described herein allows safer shaving of such designs.

[0032] Certain embodiments utilize surface treatments to increase the grip of the handle 31 of the razor 30. Such treatments can include providing an uneven or knurled surface on the front, back or on one or both sides of the handle 31. Other embodiments attach a rubber surface or other material to all or portions of the handle 31 to increase the coefficient of friction of the handle 31, especially when wet. Yet other embodiments form the handle 31 of the razor of a material that itself has a high friction coefficient when held in the hand to increase the gripping capability by the user, even when wet.

[0033] FIG. 7 is a front view of one embodiment of a shaving head 40. The shaving head 40 includes a glide surface 42 a first blade 44 and a second blade 46. Although two shaving blades are illustrated in this figure, this is only an example and more or less blades are

used in various embodiments. In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 7 the two blades are held in the shaving head 40 in a parallel alignment and are spaced apart from one another a sufficient distance to allow the hair removed by the first blade 44 to be cleared from the cutting edge as the shaving head moves along. Such alignments are common in the shaving industry and any suitable gap between the blades 44, 46 can be used. The shaving head 40 illustrated shows a glide surface 42 that is significant in comparison to the area of the two blades 44, 46. The ratio can be varied by changing the size of the glide area 42. Through adjustment of the size of the glide area 42 the overall size of the shaving head 40 can be increased or decreased depending on the application of the shaving head 40 while balancing the size reduction against the comfort and control provided by the glide area. Certain embodiments apply material to the glide area for soothing or improved gliding. Such material includes lotions, balms, ointments, medicated lotions and any other such materials.

[0034] Unexpected results have been obtained by the use of the razor having a generally reduced sized shaving head 38 in combination with an ergonomically designed handle. In embodiments described herein, varying the angle of the shaving head with respect to the handle can impact the comfort and ease of shaving various hair-growing locations. Varying angles of portions of the handle of the razor can also affect the ease of such shaving. In some embodiment, it has been found that combining a handle having relatively large width portions with a shaving head of very small width greatly improves the ability to shave in an accurate and detailed manner.

[0035] As is illustrated in FIG. 1, the handle portion 10 of some embodiments can be formed of at least two longitudinal portions attached end to end where the bottom longitudinal portion is formed of a first curvature and the second longitudinal portion is formed of a second curved shape. When lined up end to end, the curved shapes of these two longitudinal portions form a waist portion between the wide lower portion and the wide upper portion. This waist portion between the two relatively wider curvatures forms an ergonomic shape that conforms well to the hand of the user during shaving. This conformity allows increased accuracy for the use of the razor. In embodiments utilizing very narrow heads for shaving tight places or during high-precision shaving, this ergonomic shape provides the control over the shaving head 20 that is necessary for such applications.

[0036] The razors of the various embodiments illustrated and described above allow a user to shave parts of the body where shaving was previously not performed. The advantageous shape of the handle allows a user much greater control of the shaving head providing the confidence to shave the locations that the smaller shaving head make available. Up until now, people who have shaved designs into the hair of the scalps, beards or sideburns of others, typically use currently available razor blades to do so. They break a straight razor blade by hand into smaller pieces that can then be used to shave with the precision required for the details that were created. The embodiments described herein provide an alternative to this dangerous practice that will allow the detail shaving necessary to create the desired styles while providing a level of safety not currently available in the methods previously employed.

[0037] The foregoing description details certain embodiments of the invention. It will be appreciated, however, that no matter how detailed the foregoing appears in text, the invention can be practiced in many ways. As is also stated above, it should be noted that the use of particular terminology when describing certain features or aspects of the invention should not be taken to imply that the terminology is being re-defined herein to be restricted to including any specific characteristics of the features or aspects of the invention with which that terminology is associated. The scope of the invention should therefore be construed in accordance with the appended claims and any equivalents thereof.